

Sūrah 69

Al-Ḥāqqah

(The Indubitable Event)

(Makkan Period)

Title

The opening word of the *Sūrah* constitutes its title.

Period of Revelation

It is one of the early Makkan *Sūrahs*. From its contents, it emerges that it must have been revealed at a time when the opposition to the Prophet (peace be upon him) had begun, although it was not yet very intense. This report features in the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad (1, 17) on the authority of 'Umar which reads as follows: "Before my acceptance of Islam, I set out to tease the Prophet (peace be upon him). One day however, before I arrived he was already inside the *Haram*. He was then reciting *Sūrah al-Ḥāqqah* in the prayer. I stood right behind him and listened to his recitation. While I was amazed at the glory and eloquence of the Qur'ān, the thought struck me that he really is a poet, as is alleged by the Quraysh. At that precise moment, he recited the verse: 'This is the speech of an

honourable Messenger, not the speech of a poet' (verses 40–41 of *Sūrah al-Ḥāqqah*). I told myself that if he is not a poet, he must be a soothsayer. It was then that he recited this verse: 'Nor is this the speech of a soothsayer. Little do you reflect! It has been revealed by the Lord of the universe' (verses 42–43 of *Sūrah al-Ḥāqqah*). Upon listening to this, I felt deeply drawn towards Islam." It is evident from 'Umar's report that this *Sūrah* had been revealed much before his acceptance of Islam, for he did not embrace Islam until long after the above incident. He was struck by the truth of Islam on several occasions. The decisive moment, however, came when he was inside his sister's house. It was on listening to the Qur'ān there that he did accept Islam. (For details see Introduction to *Sūrah al-Wāqī'ah*.)

Subject Matter and Themes

The opening part of the *Sūrah* deals with the Hereafter, and the latter part affirms that the Qur'ān is the Word of God and that the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) is true in his claim to Prophethood.

The opening verses stress that the occurrence of the Resurrection (*Qiyāmah*) and the Hereafter (*Ākhirah*) are inevitable and bound to happen. Verses 4–12 illustrate the accursed end of earlier communities as a result of their disbelief in the Hereafter. They were subjected to divine punishment. Verses 13–17 portray the spectacle of the Day of Resurrection. Verses 18–27 spell out the purpose for which God has devised the Afterlife for mankind. On the Day of Judgement, all human beings will appear before their Lord, all of their actions will come out in the open, and everyone will receive his/her record of deeds. Those who had led their lives in accordance with the belief that they have to render their account to their Lord, and who had done good in preparation for reward in the Hereafter, will be extremely pleased with their record of deeds, and will be blessed with the eternal abode of Paradise. In contrast, those who had not discharged their duty to God and to fellow human beings, will not have anyone to save them from God's punishment. They will be consigned to the terrible punishment of Hellfire.

AL-ḤĀQQAH (The Indubitable Event)

The later part of the *Sūrah*, while addressing the Makkan disbelievers, refutes their allegation that the Qur'ān is the product of the mind of a poet or a soothsayer. It is the Word of God, presented by His Messenger. He is not authorised to add to or delete even a word from it. Were he to interpolate anything of his own, God will sever his life vein. It is truly the Book of God. Those who reject it as false will eventually regret their disbelief.